

ECDC: Economic & Community Development Committee

Tuesday February 7th, 2023, 5:00 PM

Committee Members Present: Mike Glenn, Don Griffin, and Terry Schuster.

Also, present: Heather Coyle, City Administrator Darin DeHaan, Mike Delaney, Chris Manheim, and Mayor Ken Williams.

Absent: Erin Folk and Phil Lehmann.

Present via Zoom: Rebecca Hazzard, Tom Mahoney, and Randee Mennenga.

Don Griffin called the meeting to order and called roll at 5:00 pm.

No public comment.

Tom Mahoney moved to approve December 6th, 2022, Minutes, Seconded by Terry Schuster.

Motion carried. No nays.

Terry Schuster moved to approve January 3rd, 2023, Minutes, Seconded by Mike Glenn.

Motion carried. No nays.

Don Griffin welcomed Mike Delaney to the meeting. Mike Delaney introduced himself to the committee. He is an educator for the University of Illinois Extension Community and Economic Development. He was joined by University of Illinois Extension County Executive Director Heather Coyle. He explained that the extension commission links local communities and regions to the University of Illinois. He explained the structure of the extension and educational programs provided. They have been working on the broadband project and programs to help retain young adults. Heather Coyle said one of the reasons Mike is here is due to youth retention in rural communities and economic development. Chris Manheim said Mike has been a great partner with the county wide economic development effort.

TIF Application for Mobel Furnishings LLC: City Administrator Darin DeHaan said he has met with multiple individuals regarding the old pet store location. Mark Nehrkorn is going to rehab the building and create a furniture showroom. Items can be purchased off of the sales floor or be custom made. Mayor Ken Williams has put forth a fifty-thousand-dollar TIF incentive to help motivate the process as the building has been empty for many years. Terry Schuster has spoken with the owner of the business, and he plans on have a full range of price points for the customer who walks in off the street to purchase furniture or someone who would like something custom built.

Terry Schuster moved to approve the TIF Application for Mobel Furnishings, LLC, Seconded by Tom Mahoney.

Motion carried. No nays.

Consulting Services-County ECDC-Manheim: Chris Manheim said they had a presentation with OSF today. An informational package is being created. The IEPA has completed the report of the Dayton Superior location. Once they have reviewed the report, they will forward it to the city. The Ad-Hoc committee for the county wide economic development committee will be meeting on Thursday. Resolutions for financial contributions are being presented by each community involved.

Update on Comprehensive Plan: City Administrator Darin DeHaan said the community survey has been distributed. The school district helped to push the survey out to the community as well as the library. The survey can be found on social media and on the city's website. The business survey is also available.

Chamber News/Oregon Together Report/Schools/Community Events: Don Griffin congratulated Randee Mennenga on her new position with the Chamber of Commerce. Randee Mennenga is working on updating the chamber website. She also said Shamrock the Town will be held on the 18th of March. She is also working on Blackhawk Waterways updates. The new guide should be coming soon. The Chocolate Trail flyers are also being updated.

Tom Mahoney said a teacher at OCUSD has been selected as one of the National Teachers of Year finalist. The school's future superintendent, PJ Caposey, has also been named as a finalist. The State just released Those Who Excel Award winners. A list of staff that was nominated has been submitted to the state board by the school, he is very proud of the work the staff has achieved.

Mayor Ken Williams talked about the old bank drive up facility. He is looking to create the Sarah Phelps Community Plaza. A public-private partnership was created to complete the family restroom. The space would be turned into a public green space for the community and tourists. The public could use the facility for food service, First Friday's events, or community block parties. One third of the funding is coming from a private foundation, and a portion of the funds would come from the ARPA fund. He said he would like to have a recommendation from the Economic Development Terry Schuster asked how the community would access the location. Mayor Ken Williams said the space could be rented out for a small deposit to cover the cost of cleaning the space if necessary. Randee Mennenga asked who would be maintaining the property. Mayor Ken Williams said the city would maintain the outside and the Village of Progress would continue to clean the inside.

Tom Mahoney moved to approve the recommendation of the Sarah Phelps Community Plaza to the City Council, Seconded by Rebecca Hazzard.

Motion carried. No nays.

Mike Glenn said the awning has been installed at the Coliseum, the ceiling has been painted, and artwork from artists have been installed. The Facebook page is also growing. Mike also said art pieces of different art media, such as acrylic and oil paint, have been put on display. The Boy Scouts are meeting in the basement of the Coliseum.

Don Griffin said the county has met with a couple of community members regarding the Courthouse Lawn. The county would like to add some sidewalks and memorial benches to the area. A landscape plan has been created. He also said the county has been working on broadband. The county has created an internet speed survey. They are asking for help to get the survey information out to the public. Mayor Ken Williams said Frontier will be running door to door fiber within the city.

Any other business or discussion: City Administrator Darin DeHaan said the city is getting a new business. It will be a home goods store similar to the Simply Home store that was here.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 PM.

Submitted by City Clerk Cheryl Hilton